

VZCZCXYZ0000
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLP #0919 0951945
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 051945Z APR 07
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3056
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 6685
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 4008
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 7896
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 5149
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2373
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 2489
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 3409
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4527
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 5018
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 9602
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 0250
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUMIAAA/USCINCSO MIAMI FL
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 000919

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/30/2017

TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BL](#)

SUBJECT: REGIONAL DELEGATES- GOVERNMENT COORDINATORS OR
EVO'S CAMPAIGN MANAGERS?

Classified By: Acting Ecopol Counselor Brian S. Quigley for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: On April 2, President Morales appointed eight regional delegates to coordinate GOB activities in their respective departments. According to Morales, the role of the delegates is to act as an intermediary between the national government and regional prefects, mayors, and social sectors in order to "accelerate the process of change" in Bolivia. The opposition argues that the delegates are a political tool to jumpstart Morales' presidential campaign and undermine the authority of popularly elected departmental prefects. (Note: Six out of the nine prefects are from opposition parties. End note). Installing MAS regional delegates as "quasi-prefects" falls in line with Morales' moves to centralize power. End summary.

Morales Names Regional Delegates

¶2. (U) On April 2, President Morales installed regional delegates in eight out of the nine departments, with the exception of La Paz Department. The MAS-aligned delegates' stated mission is to coordinate the work and activities of the national government with the prefects, mayors, and social sectors in their respective departments. President Morales stated that the delegates will "accelerate the process of change" taking place in Bolivia.

Opposition Voices Concern

¶3. (C) The opposition argues that the delegates are a political tool to jumpstart Morales' presidential campaign. Morales opponent and Senate President, Jose Villavicencio, claimed in a press interview that the true role of the delegates are as campaign managers for Morales' candidacy in the proposed 2008 elections. Besides placing Morales supporters in public posts throughout the country, the opposition believes that the delegates symbolize an effort by the GOB to centralize power. By installing delegates that

answer to La Paz in each of the other departments, the GOB appears to be exerting increased control over regional governments. Guillermo Ribera Cuellar, General Advisor to Santa Cruz prefect Ruben Costas, echoed the opposition's sentiment that the delegates are nothing more than Evo's campaign managers sent to erode elected prefects' powers. Ribera Cuellar told Emboff, "The prefecture will treat the delegate as any other national official. We will not tolerate interference, but will coordinate with the delegate."

¶4. (C) Comment: On the surface, the installation of regional delegates appears to be another layer of bureaucracy, but we believe the opposition's concerns are credible. As two-thirds of the prefects are Morales opponents, the GOB has slowly tried to erode their power by giving mayors increased fiscal authority. Installing MAS regional delegates as "shadow prefects" falls in line with Morales' moves to centralize power. End comment.
GOLDBERG